IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.(Currently Amended) A low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp comprising a discharge vessel,

the discharge vessel enclosing, in a gastight manner, a discharge space provided with a filling of mercury and a rare gas,

the discharge vessel comprising a luminescent layer and means for maintaining an electric discharge in the discharge space,

a portion of an inner surface of the discharge vessel facing the discharge space being provided with a protective layer adjacent said luminescent layer, wherein protective layer comprises a phosphate of scandium and wherein a thickness of the protective layer is in a range from 1 to 20 μm.

2.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the protective layer further comprises a phosphate of calcium, and/or strontium.

3.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the protective layer further comprises a borate and/or a phosphate of gadolinium.

4.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the protective layer further comprises aluminum oxide comprising particles with an effective particle size $d_p$ not exceeding 3μm.

5.(Currently Amended) The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the protective layer further comprises an alkaline earth borate~~, and wherein a thickness of the protective layer is in a range from 0.1 to 50 μm~~.

6.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor

discharge lamp as claimed in claim 5, wherein the protective layer comprises $SrB_4O_7$.

Claim 7 (Canceled)

8.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the discharge vessel comprises at least one stem, said stem being provided with the protective layer.

9.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, the discharge vessel is made from a glass comprising silicon dioxide and sodium oxide, with the glass composition comprising the following essential constituents, given in percentages by weight:

60-80 % $SiO_2$,

10-20 % $Na_2O$.

10.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor

discharge lamp as claimed in claim 9, wherein the glass composition comprises the following constituents:

70-75 % $SiO_2$,

15-18 % $Na_2O$,

0.25-2 % $K_2O$ by weight.

Claims 11-12 (Canceled)

13.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the luminescent material comprises a mixture of green-luminescing, terbium-activated cerium-magnesium aluminate, blue-luminescing barium-magnesium aluminate activated by bivalent europium, and red-luminescing yttrium oxide activated by trivalent europium.

14.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp as claimed in claim 1, wherein the protective layer further comprises aluminum oxide comprising particles with an effective particle size $d_p$ in the range of $0.1 \leq d_p \leq 0.8$ μm.

15.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp of claim 1, wherein the protective layer further comprises aluminum oxide or yttrium oxide and a borate an alkaline earth metal and/or of scandium, yttrium, or a further rare earth metal.

16.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp of claim 1, wherein the protective layer further comprises a phosphate of yttrium, or a further rare earth metal.

17.(Previously Presented) The low-pressure mercury vapor discharge lamp of claim 1, wherein an inner side of the protective layer facing the discharge space is provided with said luminescent layer, and an inner side of said luminescent layer facing the discharge space is provided with an additional protective layer.